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SPOOK

SUSPENSE AND MYSTERY



WHAT WAS THE DREAFFUL THING THAT LURKED WITHIN THE DARKENED CORRIDORS OF THE TALL CITY SKYSCRAPER? WAS IT A CREATURE FROM THE WORLD OF THE DEAD, COMING BACK FROM THE VISTAS OF ETERNITY, TO CLAIM REVENGE? TONY ZUCCO LEARNED THE ANSWER, BUT HE DIDN'T LIVE TO TELL ANY ONE, ONCE HE LOOKED UPON THE

FACE of DEATH



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FACE of DEATH

by JAY DISBROW

WHAT WAS THE DREADFUL THING THAT LURKED WITHIN THE DARKENED CORRIDORS OF THE TALL CITY SKYSCRAPER? WAS IT A CREATURE FROM THE WORLD OF THE DEAD, COMING BACK FROM THE VISTAS OF ETERNITY, TO CLAIM REVENGE? TONY ZUCCO LEARNED THE ANSWER, BUT HE DIDN'T LIVE TO TELL ANY ONE, ONCE HE LOOKED UPON, THE **FACE OF DEATH**.

YOU CAN NOT ESCAPE, ZUCCO! THE FATE YOU HAVE METED OUT TO OTHERS WILL NOW BE YOURS! PREPARE TO DIE!

NO, NO! STAY AWAY FROM ME! DON'T TOUCH ME! AAAGH!

NIGHT, IN A VACANT LOT IN DOWNTOWN BROOKLYN, TONY ZUCCO, SECRET HEAD OF A LARGE NEW YORK CITY CRIME SYNDICATE, AND SEVERAL HENCHMEN, WERE COVERING A FORMER MEMBER OF THEIR GANG, JOHN WARD....

SO, YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD GET AWAY WITH IT, EH WARD? YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD CROSS TONY ZUCCO AND LIVE!



YOU'RE A DIRTY RAT, ZUCCO, AND I HATE YOUR GUTS! YOU MAY KILL ME, BUT YOU'LL NEVER KNOW ANY PEACE OF MIND HERE AFTER! IF IT'S POSSIBLE TO COME BACK FROM THE DEAD, I'LL BE BACK FOR YOU! I'LL DRAG YOU DOWN TO THE GRAVE WITH ME!



SHUT 'IM UP! KILL HIM! KILL THE DOUBLE CROSSIN' RAT!



THE NIGHT WAS SUDDENLY FENT BY A FUSILLADE OF DEATH, AND JOHN WARD FELL TO THE GROUND, LIFELESS----



A MOMENT LATER...

HE'S DEAD, BOSS! BUSHES! IT'LL BE MONTHS BEFORE HE'S FOUND, AND BY THAT TIME, NO BODY'LL BE DO WITH THE BODY? ABLE TO IDENTIFY HIM!



LATER, IN TONY ZUCCO'S ELABORATE OFFICE IN THE LINCOLN BUILDING IN MID MANHATTAN----

I DON'T KNOW, EDDY, I GOT A FEELIN' SOMETHIN'S GONNA HAPPEN; BEEN JUMPY, SOMETHIN' BAD! MAYBE IT'S ALL DAY, WHAT WARD SAID BEFORE HE DIED! I CAN'T FORGET HIS EATIN' YOU? WARNING! I KEEP HEARIN' IT IN MY MIND, "I'LL BE BACK TO GET YOU ZUCCO!"



SUDDENLY, THE DOOR TO ZUCCO'S OFFICE BURST OPEN, AND-----

BOSS! BOSS! IT'S OUT THERE, IN THE HALL! IT NEARLY GOT ME! IT TRIED TO KILL ME!



CALM DOWN, CHARLIE! WHAT ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT? WHAT TRIED TO KILL YOU?

IT-IT WAS A GHOST! IT CAME AT ME FROM THE SHADOWS AT THE END OF THE HALL! IT WAS AWFUL!----- IT'S THE GHOST OF WARD! HE SAID HE'D COME BACK, AND HE DID! HE'LL KILL US ALL!

GET HOLD OF YOURSELF, CHARLIE BEFORE YOU CRACK UP! EDDY, GET YOUR GUN, WE'LL GO OUT FOR A LOOK-SEE!



THE THREE MEN ENTERED THE DARKENED HALLWAY, TREMBLING WITH FEAR, BUT TRYING DESPERATELY TO REASSURE THEMSELVES. THAT ALL WAS WELL.

YOU SEE, CHARLIE, THERE'S NOTHING HERE! OF COURSE NOT, AND THERE NEVER WAS, YOU MUST HAVE IMAGINED YOU SAW A GHOST, CHARLIE!----- LOOK BOYS, IT'S GETTIN' LATE! LET'S LOCK UP, AND GO HOME!



THE CRIMINALS QUITTED THE BUILDING AND WENT THEIR SEPARATE WAYS, LATE THAT NIGHT, THE CLEANING WOMAN MADE HER ROUNDS----

OH DEAR, I WISH I COULD GET ANOTHER JOB; THIS PLACE IS SO DEPRESSING AT THIS HOUR!



THEN SUDDENLY, THE SHADON OF DEATH FELL ACROSS HER FACE.

NO, NO, IT CAN'T BE, AAAAAECH!



THERE WAS NONE TO WITNESS THE TERRIBLE EVENT. IN A BRIEF INSTANT, THE OLD WOMAN WAS DEAD.



HA-HA-HA!
HA-HA-HA!

THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE BODY WAS DISCOVERED, AND SOON THE NEWS HIT THE STREETS—

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT! WOMAN FOUND SLAIN IN OFFICE BUILDING! MURDERER STILL AT LARGE!



THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, HARRY CRANFIELD, A BUSINESS EXECUTIVE WAS RETURNING TO HIS OFFICE IN THE LINCOLN BUILDING—

THIS IS THE VERY FLOOR UPON WHICH THAT WOMAN WAS KILLED LAST NIGHT! IF I DIDN'T HAVE URGENT BUSINESS TO ATTEND TO, I WOULD NEVER COME HERE AT THIS HOUR!



A STEALTHY NOISE BEHIND HIM, CAUSED CRANFIELD TO TURN SUDDENLY, AND THERE HE BEHELD AN APPARITION SO HORRIBLE, HIS SKIN CRAWLED WITH REPULSION, AND HIS HEART FROZE WITH FEAR AND LOATHING.



GREAT SCOT, WHAT IS IT?...STAY AWAY FROM ME! HELP, SOMEONE HELP ME!

FOOLISH ONE! IT IS TO BE YOUR HONOR TO CARRY MY MESSAGE OF DEATH TO THE ONE I HATE! FOR YOUR DEATH SHALL BE A WARNING OF HIS FATE WHICH IS YET TO COME!

A BRIEF STRUGGLE ENSUED, DURING WHICH CRANFIELD WAS BORN VIOLENTLY TO THE FLOOR! HE FOUGHT MADLY FOR LIFE, BUT THE TERRIBLE SPECTER TORE, GASHED, AND BLUDGEONED HIM INTO A GORY, LIFELESS MASS—



HA-HA-HA!
HA-HA-HA!

AAGH!

THEREAFTER, A REIGN OF TERROR BEGAN IN THE MID-MANHATTAN BUILDING. FOR THOSE UNFORTUNATES WHO REMAINED IN THE SKY-SCRAPER DURING THE SILENT WATCHES OF THE NIGHT, THE RESULTS WERE CATASTROPHIC!



A POLICE SURVEILLANCE WAS SET UP IN THE BUILDING TO COPE WITH THE SITUATION! REPORTERS FLOCKED TO THE SCENE OF THE TRAGEDY, BUT THEY WERE UNABLE TO SEE THE ORIGINATOR OF THE DISASTERS WHICH HOVERED ABOVE THEM—



HOW ABOUT A STATEMENT FOR THE MIRROR INSPECTOR?

WHAT'S THE MOTIVE BEHIND THESE MURDERS?

COME ON, INSPECTOR, GIVE US A RELEASE!

SORRY, BOYS, WE CAN'T MAKE A STATEMENT NOW, YOU'LL HAVE TO CLEAR THE FLOOR!

LATER, IN TONY ZUCCO'S OFFICE—

MR. ZUCCO, I'M MIKE RANDOLF OF THE NEWS! I'D LIKE TO GET YOUR VIEWS ON THESE WEIRD MURDERS!



AN OTHER REPORTER! HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE? I'M SICK OF REPORTERS! THEY'VE BEEN PESTERING ME ALL DAY! GET OUT! I'VE GOT NOTHING TO SAY!

LOOK, MISTER, YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE IMPERTINENT ABOUT IT! I CAME HERE TO GET A STORY, AND IF YOU DON'T TREAT ME WITH THE PROPER RESPECT, IT COULD RESULT IN A LOT OF UNPLEASANT PUBLICITY FOR YOU!



WHY YOU TWO-BIT NEWS HAWK, DON'T THREATEN ME, OR I'LL HAVE YOU THROWN OUT ON YOUR EAR! NOW GET OUT OF MY OFFICE!

AS MIKE RANDOLF LEFT THE RACKET KING'S OFFICE....

HE ACTS LIKE A MAN WHO HAS SOMETHING TO HIDE; AND I DON'T MEAN HIS INCOME TAX RECORDS! I THINK I'LL KEEP AN EYE ON HIM! THERE MAY BE A STORY IN IT!



AS THE DAYS WENT BY, THE CORRIDORS OF THE BUILDING WERE PATROLLED CONTINUALLY BY POLICEMEN, BUT EVEN THEY WERE NOT IMMUNE FROM THE DREADFUL THING THAT STRUCK IN THE DARKNESS OF THE NIGHT.



THESE TERRIFYING PHENOMENA BEGAN TO HAVE THEIR EFFECT ON ZUCCO AND HIS MOB. THEY SLOWLY BEGAN TO CRACK UP! (I CAN'T STAND YOU CRUMMY RAT! YOU'D TURN ANY MORE OF THIS! ANY OF US ALL IN ONE OF US MIGHT BE THE NEXT TO GO! I'M GONNA GIVE MYSELF UP, AND SPILL THE WORKS TO THE COPS! AT LEAST I'LL BE SAFE IN JAIL!)



THE HUGE, OBESE MOBSTER REMOVED A PISTOL FROM HIS DESK DRAWER, AND FIRED!



ZUCCO REPLACED THE PISTOL IN HIS DESK DRAWER, AND TURNED TO HIS MEN....

CARRY HIS BODY DOWN THE FIRE ESCAPE AND DRIVE HIM TO THE RIVER, AND DUMP HIM! BE SURE TO USE WEIGHTS SO HE WON'T FLOAT TO THE SURFACE!—THE STREETS ARE ALMOST EMPTY AT THIS HOUR, BUT IF ANYBODY GETS NOSY, JUST SAY HE'S DRUNK!



A MOMENT LATER...

HELP ME CLEAN OUT THESE RECORDS, EDDY! WE'RE PULLIN' OUT FOR A WHILE! I DON'T KNOW WHO'S BEEN DOIN' ALL THESE KILLIN' LATELY, BUT IT'S NOT SAFE TO STAY HERE! WE'RE LEADIN' FOR JERSEY, 'TIL THE HEAT'S OFF!



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, MIKE RANDOLF, THE REPORTER, RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM A FRIEND AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS....

WHAT'S THAT? YOU SAY YOU FOUND A BODY FLOATING IN THE EAST RIVER?

THAT'S RIGHT, MIKE! IT WAS CHARLIE BRENT, ONE OF TONY ZUCCO'S BOYS! HIS FEET WERE TIED, INDICATING THAT WEIGHTS WERE ATTACHED TO THEM, BUT THEY MUST HAVE COME OFF SOMEHOW, AND HE BOBBED TO THE SURFACE! HE HAD SEVERAL 45'S SLUGS IN HIM, AND IT SO HAPPENS THAT ZUCCO HAS A FORTY-FIVE REGISTERED DOWN HERE!



LATER, IN HIS NEW JERSEY RETREAT, ZUCCO READ OF THIS NEW DISCOVERY WITH GROWING ALARM---

THEY SUSPECT ME OF KILLING HIM! I LEFT MY GUN IN THE OFFICE; IF THEY FIND IT THEY'LL MATCH IT AGAINST THE SLUGS THEY DUG OUT OF CHARLIE, AND I'LL BE COOKED! I'VE GOT TO GO BACK THERE AND GET IT!



DURING THE SMALL HOURS OF THE NIGHT, THE RACKET BOSS ENTERED THE BUILDING WHICH HOUSED HIS OFFICE, AND HIS NOCTURNAL VISIT WAS OBSERVED BY THE KEEN REPORTER---

AH, I KNEW IF I WAITED LONG ENOUGH HE'D SHOW! THIS LENDS WEIGHT TO MY THEORY THAT HE KILLED CHARLIE BRENT, AND LEFT THE MURDER WEAPON IN HIS OFFICE!



THE UNDERWORLD KING ENTERED A SERVICE ELEVATOR, AND SIGHED WITH RELIEF, AS HE STARTED UPWARD---

THIS IS LUCK! THE PLACE IS EMPTY, JUST AS I HOPED FOR!



HE ARRIVED AT THE TWENTY FIFTH FLOOR, AND WITH TREMBLING FINGERS, HE UNLOCKED THE DOOR AND ENTERED THE DARK INTERIOR---

LUCK IS WITH ME, ALL THE WAY! NOW TO GET THAT GUN AND BLOW TOWN AGAIN!



IT WAS A TERRIBLE APPARITION; A THING OF SWIRLING, UNDULATING MASS, WITH A FRIGHTFUL COUNTENANCE THAT STRUCK TERROR INTO THE COWARDLY HEART OF TONY ZUCCO! AND THEN IT LUNGED AT HIM, AND AS FINGERS OF STEEL CLOSED ABOUT HIS FAT NECK, ZUCCO KNEW IN THAT BRIEF INSTANT THAT HIS EVIL LIFE WOULD SOON BE ENDED.

YES, I AM JOHN WARD, AND THE SWEET FRUIT OF VENGEANCE IS NOW MINE! DIE! DIE!



NO, DON'T --- CAN'T BREATHE! AGRAFKKK!

THUS YOU HAVE RETURNED AT LAST, ZUCCO! NOW VENGEANCE SHALL BE MINE! NOW MY SOUL WILL FIND PEACE, WHEN YOU ARE DEAD!

HEAVEN HELP ME, IT'S TRUE! YOU'RE A GHOST! THE GHOST OF JONNIE WARD!



SUDDENLY, THE DARKNESS WAS ILLUMINATED BY A BRILLIANT LIGHT, AS MIKE RANDOLF, WHO HAD BEEN A SILENT WITNESS TO THE TERRIBLE TRAGEDY, TOOK A FLASH-BULB PHOTOGRAPH OF THE GORGONIAN VISITANT....

WHAT IS THIS? AN INTERLOPER WHO DARES TO LOOK UPON FORBIDDEN THINGS!

YES, AND I NOW HAVE THE MEANS OF DESTROYING YOU!

THE TERRIBLE CREATURE DROPPED THE LIFELESS FORM OF TONY ZUCCO AND ADVANCED TOWARD THE YOUNG REPORTER WHO QUICKLY REMOVED THE BACK SECTION OF HIS CAMERA....

IT'S YOUR FOOL, FOOL THAT YOU ARE! DOOM THAT IS SEALED! THIS BY COMING HERE YOU HAVE SEALED YOUR DOOM! CAMERA MAKES AN INSTANTANEOUS REPRODUCTION!

SUDDENLY, THE AIR WAS PERMEATED BY BILLOWS OF EFFULGENT STEAM, AND GREAT TONGUES OF FLAME LEAPED FORWARD TO ENGLUT THE TERRIBLE THING! IN AN INSTANT IT HAD VANISHED....

AAAGH!

THE YOUNG REPORTER RETURNED TO HIS OFFICE AND WROTE HIS EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT OF THE FANTASTIC INCIDENT. LATER HE WAS CALLED BEFORE HIS IRATE EDITOR....

I'VE MADE A STUDY OF PSYCHIC PHENOMENA, AND I KNOW THAT AN EVIL SPIRIT CAN NOT LOOK UPON ITS OWN IMAGE AND LIVE! AND THIS PRINT IS THE INSTRUMENT THAT WILL DESTROY YOU! LOOK AT IT!

IT'S TRUE! THE EVILS IN MY EYES ARE REFLECTED BACK INTO MY SOUL! I CAN NOT BEAR IT! IT IS TEARING ME APART!

WHAT'S THE IDEA OF WRITING SUCH A RIDICULOUS YARN, RANDOLF? IF YOUR "GHOST STORY" HAD BEEN PUBLISHED, THIS PAPER WOULD HAVE BEEN THE LAUGHING STOCK OF NEW YORK! WHERE DID YOU GET SUCH A NONSENSICAL IDEA?

BUT CHIEF, I CAN PROVE THAT STORY IS TRUE! I'M THE ONLY MAN IN THE WORLD WHO HAS ACTUALLY PHOTOGRAPHED A GHOST! I'VE GOT THE PICTURE RIGHT HERE!

TAKE A LOOK AT THAT! NOW DO YOU BELIEVE ME?

ARE YOU KIDDING? YOU MUST HAVE HAD A HALLUCINATION, SON--

---THERE'S NOTHING IN THIS PICTURE BUT THE BODY OF ZUCCO, LYING ACROSS A DESK!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND THIS! THE GHOST WAS IN THE PICTURE! I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES!... BUT WHEN THE THING VANISHED, HIS IMAGE IN THE PRINT MUST HAVE SOME HOW VANISHED WITH HIM!... BUT NO MATTER WHAT YOU MAY THINK, I KNOW THE GHOST WAS REAL!

LOOK, MIKE, GIVE ME A RE-WRITE ON THE ZUCCO DEATH, AND FORGET THIS NONSENSE ABOUT GHOSTS! THERE ARE NO SUCH THINGS!

EDITOR'S NOTE: WE WOULD ADVISE YOU NOT TO FORGET, MIKE! YOU KNOW WHAT YOU SAW WITH YOUR OWN EYES, AND WE CAN NOT DOUBT WHAT WE SAW WITH OURS--

The End

JEWEL of DEATH



JOHN WESTMORE WAS GREATLY INTERESTED IN A BEAUTIFUL BAUBLE OF EXQUISITE DESIGN. HE ENTERED THE CURIO SHOP WHERE IT WAS DISPLAYED, AND PURCHASED IT.

IT IS NOT SIMULATED, THAT IS A MAGNIFICENT SIM- FROM TIBET! THERE IS NO OTHER GEM LIKE IT! JEWEL! ALTHOUGH IT RESEMBLES A RUBY, ITS MOLECULAR STRUCTURE IS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT! NO ONE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF GEM IT IS!



HE TOOK THE JEWEL HOME, AND PLACED IT UPON HIS DRESSER. THAT NIGHT, WHEN HE HAD OCCASION TO ENTER THE ROOM, HE NOTICED THE STONE WAS GLOWING IN THE DARK, AND EMITTING A STRANGE UNDULATING VAPOR.

GREAT SCOT, WHAT'S CAUSING THAT?



HE PICKED UP THE GLOWING JEWEL, AND AS HE STARED INTENSELY INTO ITS POLISHED SURFACE, HE GASPED IN ASTONISHMENT, AS HE SAW-----

IMAGES, TAKING SHAPE IN THE GLASS! HORRIBLE, GROTESQUE IMAGES, GROWING MORE AND MORE CLEAR! GAD! IT'S TERRIBLE!



HE HURRIED TO THE TELEPHONE AND CALLED A FRIEND.

---YES, BILL, COME RIGHT AWAY, I WANT--- NO, NO, IT CAN'T BE!



THOSE CREATURES, COMING OUT OF THE STONE!... THE NETHER WORLD, AND THE WHAT ARE YOU? JEWEL WHICH YOU ACQUIRED IS WHERE DID YOU? THE BRIDGE THAT SPANS THE GAP BE- COME FROM? BETWEEN THE MATERIAL WORLD AND THE WORLD OF DARKNESS. IT IS THE ENTRANCE WAY THROUGH WHICH WE MAY PASS IF ONE LOOKS UPON ITS SURFACE FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME AS YOU HAVE DONE!



IT WAS FASHIONED AGES AGO BY AN ORIENTAL MYSTIC, THAT WE MIGHT INDULGE IN THAT WHICH WE LOVE MOST! TO KILL, AS WE NOW KILL YOU!

AAAGH!



WHEN JOHN'S FRIEND ARRIVED, HE DISCOVERED TO HIS HORROR THAT THE YOUTH WAS DEAD, AND THAT SEVERAL POLICE WERE ALREADY ON THE SCENE---

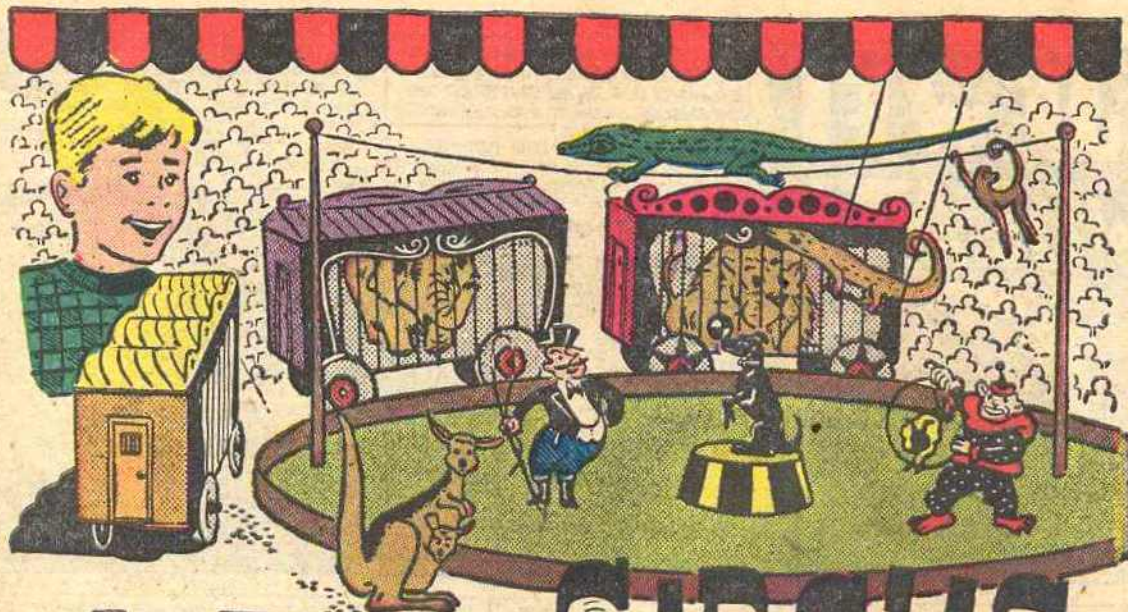
BUT, OFFICER, WE CAN'T TELL! THERE WHAT WAS SEEMS TO BE SEVERAL IT THAT BURNS ON THE BODY, BUT KILLED WHAT CAUSED THEM IS UN- HIM! KNOWN! ONE OF HIS NEIGHBORS HEARD HIS SCREAM AND CALLED US!



WE FOUND THIS STONE NEXT TO THE BODY. IT'S THE ONLY PIECE OF EVIDENCE WE HAVE, SO I GUESS I BETTER TAKE IT BACK TO HEADQUARTERS! BOY IT SURF IS A BEAUTY! I COULD JUST SIT AND LOOK AT IT ALL DAY!



ENDING-



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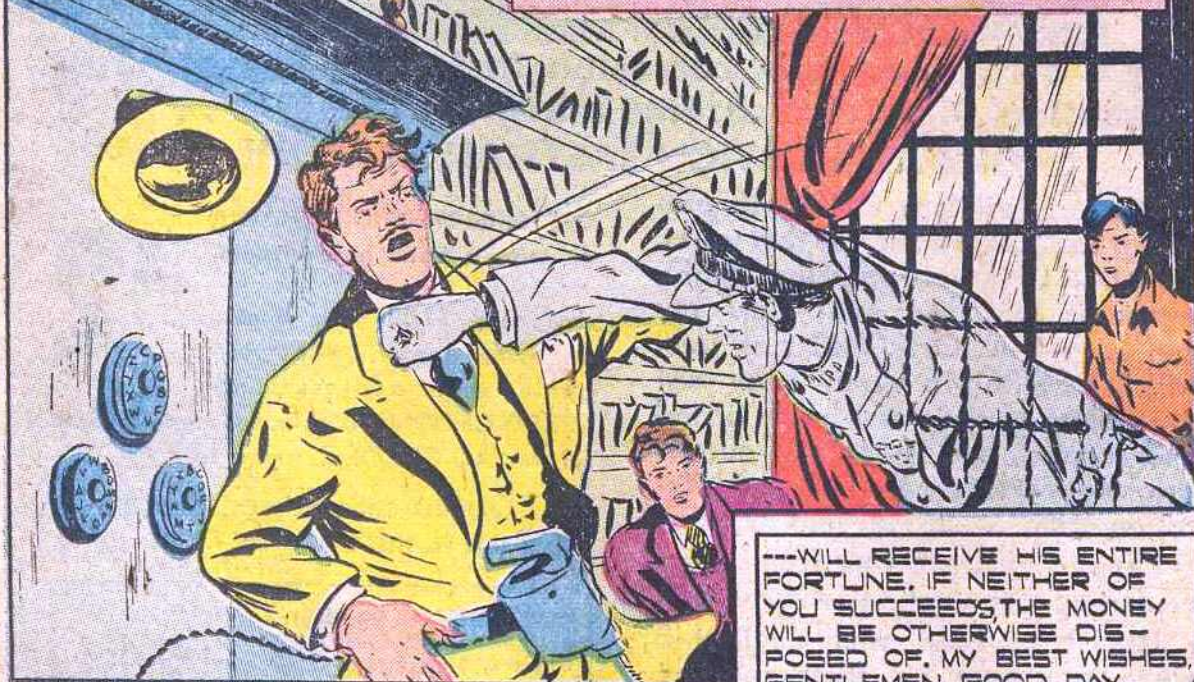
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THE

SPOOK

ODD HOW AN OLD MAN'S FRANK CAN SHAPE DESTINY. A THREE-LETTER WORD CONTROLS A FORTUNE AND LEADS SERGEANT SPOOK AND JERRY TO ONE OF THEIR MOST CURIOUS ADVENTURES IN "THE MYSTERY OF THE THREE DIALS"!



---WILL RECEIVE HIS ENTIRE FORTUNE, IF NEITHER OF YOU SUCCEEDS, THE MONEY WILL BE OTHERWISE DISPOSED OF. MY BEST WISHES, GENTLEMEN. GOOD DAY.

IT ALL BEGAN WITH THE FANTASTIC WILL OF GREGORY QUAYLE!

ACCORDING TO YOUR LATE UNCLE'S WILL, YOU HAVE UNTIL MIDNIGHT TO-NIGHT TO FIGURE OUT THE COMBINATION OF THE OLD SAFE IN HIS STUDY. WHICHEVER ONE OF YOU IS SUCCESSFUL----





LATER, AS JERRY RETURNS SOME BOOKS TO THE PUBLIC LIBRARY...



BOB EXPLAINS HIS UNCLE'S WILL.



OUTSIDE THE LIBRARY...



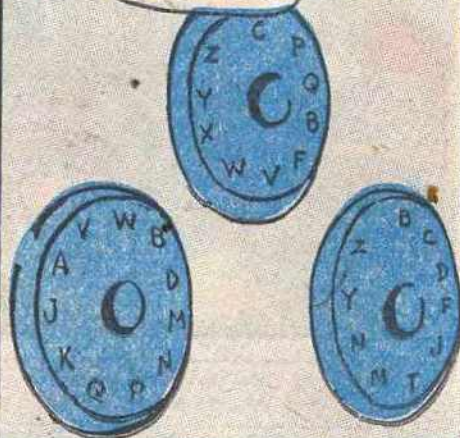
AT THE OLAYLE MANSION.



IN ORDER TO OPEN THIS SAFE; THE LETTERS ON THESE THREE DIALS MUST BE SET TO SPELL A CERTAIN WORD.

AND YOU'VE GOT TO FIGURE OUT THAT WORD BEFORE MIDNIGHT TONIGHT, EH?

THAT'S RIGHT, JERRY. REMEMBER, EACH DIAL MUST BE SET AT A DIFFERENT LETTER.



I'LL JUST COPY OFF THESE LETTERS, BOB, SO I CAN WORK ON THE PROBLEM FOR YOU.

A LITTLE LATER....

THANKS, JERRY, AND DON'T FORGET, MIDNIGHT'S THE ZERO HOUR.

GUESS I WON'T BE MUCH HELP THIS TIME, SPOOK.

I'VE GOT JUST THE MAN TO SOLVE THIS TWISTER, JERRY. A TRIP TO GHOST TOWN IS IN ORDER.



JUST STEP THIS WAY, JERRY.

IN GHOST TOWN...

THE MAN WE'RE GOING TO SEE IS NAMED NOAH, JERRY, BUT HE'S NOT THE ONE FROM THE ARK.

AH, MR. WEBSTER! WE'RE IN LUCK!

GEE, NOAH WEBSTER, THE LEXICOGRAPHER!

WHAT A WELCOME SURPRISE! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, SERGEANT!



IN NOAH WEBSTER'S LIBRARY, JERRY EXPLAINS HIS PROBLEM.

WELL, JERRY, THAT'S NOT SO DIFFICULT. NO ENGLISH WORD CAN BE FORMED WITHOUT A VOWEL. THE ONLY VOWEL THAT APPEARS ON YOUR DIALS IS THE LETTER Y.



I SEE, SIR.

NOW, THERE IS NO ENGLISH WORD THAT BEGINS WITH Y AND HAS TWO CONSONANTS. THEREFORE Y IS NOT THE FIRST LETTER, RIGHT?

RIGHT!



WHEN IT COMES TO THREE-LETTER WORDS BEGINNING WITH TWO CONSONANTS AND ENDING WITH Y, THE FIRST LETTER MUST EITHER BE S, OR THE SECOND LETTER MUST BE H, L, OR R. COME HERE, LAD.



YOU SEE NONE OF THESE LETTERS APPEAR ON THE DIALS. THEREFORE, Y MUST BE THE SECOND LETTER OF YOUR WORD. THERE! THAT OUGHT TO BE ENOUGH OF A HINT FOR YOU.

THAT'S SWELL, SIR. THANKS FOR SETTING US STRAIGHT.



TOO BAD YOU CAN'T STAY. WE'RE HAVING A LITTLE SPELLING BEE AT THE GHOST TOWN SCHOOL TOMORROW. I THINK JERRY WOULD ENJOY IT.

JERRY'LL HAVE ENOUGH OF A PROBLEM HELPING BOB FIND THE MYSTERY WORD.

GEE, MR. WEBSTER, I SURE COULD USE YOU IN MY ENGLISH GRAMMAR CLASS!



BACK FROM GHOST TOWN.

HOW MUCH TIME HAVE WE GOT, SPOOK?

HURRY-ONLY 30 MINUTES LEFT!





SPOOK PICKS UP THE
ELECTRIC DRILL AND....

WAIT A
MINUTE! NOT
SO FAST!



...SWINGS IT AROUND TRASK'S NECK.

A LITTLE TWIST I
LEARNED FROM A
SOUTH AMERICAN
CABALLERO!

AWK!



A FEW MINUTES LATER.

WOW, JERRY!
DON'T TELL ME
YOU STOPPED THESE
TWO ALL BY YOURSELF?
THAT'S THE SPIRIT!



IT'S THE
SPIRIT,
ALL RIGHT!



ARE
WE IN
TIME?

JUST IN TIME TO
HAUL THESE BABIES
OFF TO JAIL FOR
ATTEMPTED
ROBBERY!



HARKINS, CALL MY UNCLE'S
LAWYER, PLEASE, AND ASK HIM
TO COME RIGHT OVER. I THINK
I'M GOING TO NEED HIM FOR A
LAWFUL SAFE-OPENING.

YES,
SIR!





EYES OF THE SNAKE..

JIM PATTERSON was a strange kind of a hunter, for he would never kill any living thing unless he needed it for food, or unless it attacked him first and his life was at stake. Most of the time he hunted with a little black box, a camera, and his photographs of wild animal life of the African jungle were famous throughout the civilized world.

Getting pictures was not easy, for he would have to steal right up to the haunts of savage beasts. Sometimes the wind would shift suddenly, and the huge creatures would become aware of his presence and would attack in fury. Then he fell back on his high-powered rifle. At other times he would lie hidden in tall grass for hours on end, and would feel all stiff and weary, just waiting for the beasts to come within range of his little black box.

This day he lay dozing in the village of Otapi in the Roratunga country of Central Africa. He had arrived late that afternoon and had been welcomed by the old chief, and made comfortable in a hut in the compound. The chief trusted he would spend a restful night; that is, if the tiger didn't attack. This tiger was a wary beast, too old to attack other animals who were faster and could get away. He would make raids on the village; and so astute and wary was he that they had never been able to kill him, in spite of the numerous tiger-traps that had been readied every evening for him. The natives believed he had supernatural powers and could not be killed by any ordinary man.

It was almost midnight when Jim was awakened by a fierce chattering and screeching near his hut. He leaped from his bed, his high-powered rifle in his hand at almost the same instant, and raced out into the moonlit night. There was a monkey, tied to a stake and unable to flee, and ready to leap upon the little beast was a huge tiger. This must be the raider the village feared so. Already men armed with spears were racing to the scene.

The tiger turned from his quarry to face them. And even as a dozen strong arms threw great spears in the tiger's direction, he leaped into the air with a roar. The high-powered rifle cracked, and the tiger fell. But he still had fight in him, and made for Jim Patterson. But Jim was ready, and again his rifle spoke. This time the tiger did not rise.

Late as it was, fires were built, and there was great rejoicing. The natives danced, for now the evil spirit had left their village. The old chief was overjoyed. He called to Jim, and pointed to the monkey, who was still tied to the stake, his hair still standing on end with fear. They fed him bananas, and the monkey calmed down after a while.

"Seeing as you have saved the life of this monkey," said the chieftain, "I would make you a gift of him. It may seem a trifle in a country where there are many thousands of his kind; but I assure you he is a most unusual animal, and invaluable to any hunter. For one thing, his sense of smell will always tell him when a fruit is poisoned, or a berry or a nut. He has been trained by a great hunter for many years. Out of our gratitude we would present him to you. You will find him a good friend in days of need. His name is Otombo."

The old chief was right. On many an occasion Jim was thankful he had Otombo with him. As they trekked through the forest, Otombo would sit on Jim's shoulder, or run far ahead, looking the ground over. He would bring fruits and nuts and berries to his new master, as if he knew Jim had saved his life; and Jim knew that the food gathered by his little friend was free from poison or taint.

Then Jim set off south to the great gorilla country to make pictures for an American magazine. It was dangerous to come within range of the giant beasts, the most powerful of the great forests. Otombo went along, as usual. Jim travelled light, and had to depend on the forests to furnish his food for him.

The second day out they reached thick jungle country, where he knew the gorillas made their homes. The mother-gorillas would sleep with their young in the high tree-tops, while the male gorillas slept on the ground at the foot of the trees to protect them. It was especially dangerous as many pictures had to be made at night by flashlight.

It was here that Otombo showed his value; for Jim was so interested in the pictures he was making, that he did not notice how soon his food was giving out. Moreover, a group of monkeys broke into his camp and carried off the major part of his provisions. But Jim refused to give up just when his project seemed to be succeeding so well.

Otombo now went off on his own into the deep forest, and would often return chattering fiercely. Jim knew what he wanted, and would follow Otombo to a berry patch, or where there was a fresh supply of nuts. But one day on the trail, Jim forgot about his little pal who went ahead. At the side of the trail was a tree just bursting with beautiful red fruits, and Jim helped himself generously, filling his pockets. His stomach felt empty for he had dined on nothing but berries that morning. Just as he was about to bite into the fruit, Otombo came rushing at him and grabbed it from his hand, chattering all the while, yelling and scolding, for Jim had not let him rest the fruit first. Jim heeded the monkey's advice, and immediately threw away the fruit, for now he was certain that it was poisonous. Once more little Otombo had saved his life.

The next day Otombo got into trouble—real trouble. Bounding along the trail ahead of Jim, Otombo came on a strange little creature such as he had never seen before. It was a porcupine. Otombo reached out a hand out of curiosity, and in a flash drew it back. He screamed in pain, for his little hand was full of porcupine quills like needles.

Jim got to the spot as fast as he could go, and took little Otombo back to camp. Here he carefully drew out the quills, and disinfected the wounds. It was very painful, and Otombo whined all through the night.

When Jim set out the next morning, he decided to let Otombo stay in camp, and accord-

ingly tied the little monkey to a long line. Otombo did not like the idea of staying behind when there was work to do, and he complained bitterly. Jim could hear him all the way down the trail.

It turned out to be a big day for Jim. His luck with his pictures was phenomenal, for he found a whole family of gorillas sportin' about in the warm sun in a large open space, and he took many fine pictures of their family life. As such pictures had never been made at close range, he was highly pleased.

It was quite late when he returned to his camp, tired with the day's exertions. He was ravenously hungry, but did not dare pick the fruits without his trusty pal to tell him which was fit to eat. However, there was a type of butternut he knew was good, and he picked many of these. They were very nourishing and most satisfying.

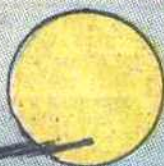
As Jim approached his camp, he did not hear a sound. This was strange, for the little monkey must sense his coming, and he would usually be screeching out a loud welcome. Perhaps something was wrong. Jim broke into a trot.

Something certainly was wrong. There in the clearing near his camp sat Otombo on the ground, fascinated by something. Jim could not see what it was, but as he came closer he saw the huge python. The snake moved its head round and round. Otombo seemed paralyzed. He could not move from the spot, although at any instant the huge snake might coil itself around him and swallow him whole. The snake was hypnotizing him, so that Otombo could neither move nor cry out. Closer and closer came the python. Jim did not wait. He raised his gun and took careful aim. Then he fired. It was a clean shot, right through the python's head. The shot broke the spell, and Otombo began to chatter in fear and then in joy at Jim's homecoming.

"Now it's even," said Jim. "You once saved my life, and now I have saved yours. That makes us real pals, doesn't it?"

Otombo must have agreed with what Jim was saying, for he jumped onto Jim's shoulder and it seemed he would never stop chattering.

SNOW GHOST



LARRY DAVIS, A YOUNG NEWSPAPER REPORTER, DID NOT BELIEVE IN THE EXISTENCE OF MONSTERS. HOWEVER, HE FOUND OUT DIFFERENTLY WHEN HE TOOK UP THE TRAIL OF THE THING THAT ROAMED THE FROZEN WASTE LANDS OF THE NORTH.



IN THE OFFICE OF THE DAILY DISPATCH...

LARRY, GET OVER TO CITY HOSPITAL, FAST! A PATIENT WAS JUST BROUGHT IN, AND HE CLAIMS HE SAW A MONSTER!—I WANT A FULL COVERAGE!

ARE YOU KIDDING, CHIEF? I PAST THE FAIRY TALE STAGE YEARS AGO!



THIS IS NO GAG, LARRY, THE GUY'S SO HYSTERICAL, THEY HAD TO FLY IN A PSYCHIATRIC SPECIALIST FROM CHICAGO TO TREAT HIM! NOW GET GOING AND BRING BACK A STORY!

OKAY, CHIEF, BUT IF THIS ISN'T A PHONEY SETUP, I'LL EAT MY HAT... IN PUBLIC!



SEVERAL MINUTES LATER...

YES, MR. DAVIS, YOU CAN SEE THE PATIENT, BUT PLEASE CUT YOUR INTERVIEW SHORT. HE'S SUFFERING FROM A SEVERE CASE OF SHOCK!

THANKS, DOC, I'LL LEAVE AS SOON AS I GET THE FACTS!



SIR; I'M LARRY DAVIS, YES...I'LL OF THE DAILY DISPATCH, TELL YOU CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED? --IT WAS AWFUL...THE MOST HORRIFYING EXPERIENCE OF MY LIFE!



I HAD HEARD RUMORS OF AN OLD INDIAN BURIAL GROUND IN A REMOTE PART OF ALASKA WHICH CONTAINED A FABULOUS DEPOSIT OF GOLD, SO I WENT UP THERE TO INVESTIGATE...



...I HAD JUST FINISHED BLASTING OUT AN ENCLOSED CAVERN, AND I WAS ABOUT TO EXCAVATE AN OTHER WHEN A SUDDEN GROWL CAUSED ME TO TURN ABOUT, AND I SAW SOMETHING THAT PARALYZED ME WITH TERROR.



"IT WAS AN ENORMOUS CREATURE WITH THE BODY OF A MAN, AND THE HEAD OF A CARNIVOROUS BEAST. IT SPOKE TO ME IN A RASPY, GUTTURAL VOICE THAT SENT A SHUDDER OF DREAD COURSEING THROUGH ME!"



"I TURNED AND RAN WITH THE THINGS PURSUING ME. I LOOKED BACK AND I COULD ALMOST SWEAR I SAW THE CREATURE CHANGE ITS FORM!"



I RAN AND RAN, 'TILL MY LEGS WERE NUMB WITH PAIN-- AT LAST I ARRIVED AT AN ISOLATED ARMY POST-- THEY HAD ME FLOWN DOWN HERE!



DR. TRAVIS, AN OTHER EMERGENCY PATIENT JUST ARRIVED, AND HE SAY'S HE SAW THIS MONSTER TOO!

HMM!

WHAT'S THAT?



LARRY RUSHES TO THE SIDE OF THE SECOND PATIENT AS HE IS WHEELED IN.

I'M DAVIS OF THE DISPATCH, CAN YOU GIVE ME...

PLEASE MR. DAVIS, YOU MUST NOT QUESTION THE PATIENT NOW!

LET ME TELL HIM...I MUST CONVINCE SOMEONE OR GO MAD!



"I WAS TRAPPING FURS IN ALASKA. I HAD JUST MADE A BIG HAUL, AND WAS ON MY WAY HOME. I DECIDED TO TAKE A SHORT CUT TO THE DOCKS THROUGH AN OLD BURIAL GROUND, WHEN SUDDENLY...



GRAAW! FOOL— YOU WALK UPON FORBIDDEN GROUND... FOR THAT YOU SHALL BE PUNISHED!



"THEN, AS IT CAME AT ME, IT SEEMED TO CHANGE INTO SOMETHING DIFFERENT BUT EQUALLY AS ABHORRENT"

NO, NO STAY BACK!



I EMPLOYED MY PISTOL INTO HIM, AND I MUST HAVE WOUNDED HIM, BECAUSE HE RAN BACK INTO THE WOODS.

PARDON ME, GENTLEMEN, I AM PROF. KRUGER, OF STATE UNIVERSITY. I AND MY COLLEAGUES HEARD OF THIS STRANGE HAPPENING, AND I WONDER IF WE MIGHT BE PERMITTED TO QUESTION THE PATIENT?

THERE ARE TWO OF THEM, PROF— TAKE YOUR PICK.



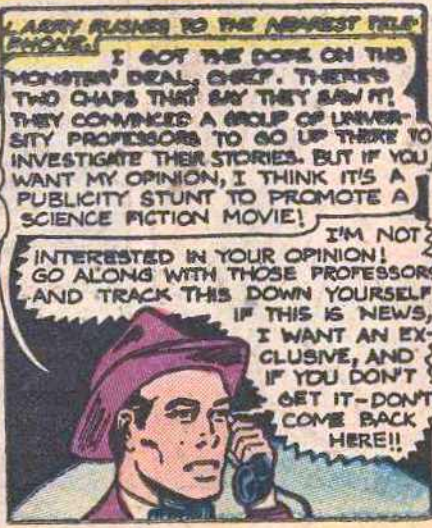
AFTER THE TWO PATIENTS REPEATED THEIR STORIES TO THE SCIENTISTS...

THIS IS INCREDIBLE! I MOVE THAT IT LENDS CREDENCE TO DR. GROM'S THEORY OF STRUCTURAL RETROGRESSION!

GENTLEMEN, I MOVE THAT WE EMBARK FOR ALASKA!

YES, PROF. AND SINCE THE ARMY HAS AGREED TO FINANCE THE UNDERTAKING, IT SHOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT!

SO LONG, DOC, AND THANKS.



LARRY RUSHES TO THE NEAREST TELEPHONE.

I GOT THE DOPE ON THIS MONSTER DEAL, GUESS. THERE'S TWO CHAPS THAT SAY THEY SAW IT! THEY CONVINCE A GROUP OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS TO GO UP THERE TO INVESTIGATE THEIR STORIES. BUT IF YOU WANT MY OPINION, I THINK IT'S A PUBLICITY STUNT TO PROMOTE A SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE!

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR OPINION! GO ALONG WITH THOSE PROFESSORS AND TRACK THIS DOWN YOURSELF! IF THIS IS NEWS, I WANT AN EXCLUSIVE, AND IF YOU DON'T GET IT—DON'T COME BACK HERE!!



SO THAT THE YOUNG REPORTER RELUCTANTLY JOINS THE PARTY OF SCIENTISTS AS THEY TRUDGE THROUGH THE ALASKAN SNOWS.

WE'RE NEAR THE BURIAL GROUND NOW, GENTLEMEN, YES, THERE IT IS!

THIS LOOKS LIKE THE REST OF THE COUNTRY SIDE, HOW CAN YOU TELL IT'S THE BURIAL GROUND?

ACCORDING TO OUR DIRECTIONS, THESE ARE THE CLIFFS THAT SURROUND THE BURIAL GROUND!

LOOK, PROF, A PLAQUE, WITH A MESSAGE ON IT!



IT'S WRITTEN IN A CORRUPTION OF ARABIC! I CAN JUST MAKE IT OUT. IT READS---
 "FROM THE WING OF AN EAGLE THAT SAILS THROUGH THE BLUE, FROM THE HEART OF A WOLF WITH ITS SAVAGERY TRUE, FROM THE BLOOD OF A BAT WITH ITS SECRETS UNKNOWN, I HAVE CREATED AN OGRE TO PROTECT MY OWN--- BEWARE THIS FORBIDDEN GROUND--- TOKOMA!"



THIS TOKOMA MUST HAVE BEEN A WITCH DOCTOR!

PROF, LOOK! UP ON THAT HILL---A HUGE MISSHAPEN CREATURE! IT'S RUNNING AWAY!

PERHAPS WE SHOULD LEAVE THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT ARE BETTER LEFT UNKNOWN!



YOU GUYS CAN LEAVE IF YOU WANT TO, BUT I'M STAYING! I WAS SENT UP HERE TO GET A STORY, AND IF I DON'T GET IT, IT'LL COST ME MY JOB!

IF YOU STAY HERE, IT MAY COST YOU YOUR LIFE, DAVIS! WE'RE LEAVING--- WONT YOU COME WITH US?



LARRY DEMURS, AND AFTER THE OTHERS LEAVE, HE TAKES UP THE TRAIL OF THE THING ALONE

THAT'S ODD! THAT CAVERN IS SEALED UP WITH A THATCHED FRAME!



THE TRAIL LEADS RIGHT TO THIS CAVE. I WONDER IF THAT THING COULD BE INSIDE---NO OF COURSE NOT! THERE'S NO SUCH THINGS AS GHOULS OR MONSTERS! IN ANY EVENT, I'LL KNOW IN A SECOND, IT'S COMING OPEN---

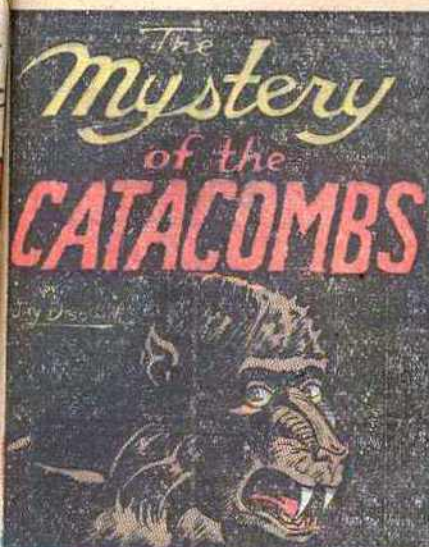


NO--NO--IT CAN'T BE---
AAAAGH!

HAD SOME ONE BEEN THERE TO WITNESS THE TRAGIC DEATH OF LARRY DAVIS, THE TRUTH OF HIS PASSING WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE KNOWN. BUT THERE WAS NO ONE. SILENCE REIGNED OVER THE SMALL BURIAL GROUND; A SILENCE BROKEN ONLY BY THE TROD OF NAKED FEET.



The End



WHILE EXPLORING THE ANCIENT CATACOMBS OF ROME WITH HIS AFRICAN GUIDE NABOLA, ARNOLD CREG, A BRITISH NATURALIST, CAME UPON A MOST REMARKABLE INSCRIPTION



THIS IS A REAL FIND, AND I DON'T INTEND TO LET A SUPERSTITIOUS WARNING PREVENT ME FROM MAKING THE DISCOVERY OF THE YEAR!



SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A THUNDEROUS CLATTER, AS THE ROCKS ABOVE THE ENTRANCE COLLAPSED, SEALING OFF THE OPENING AND INTOMBING CREG WITHIN.



COURAGE, BWANA, I AM CLEARING AWAY THE ROCKS! I'LL HAVE YOU OUT SOON!



FROM OUT OF THE DARKNESS THEY LEAPED TOWARD HIM, AND ATTACKED WITH SAVAGE FEROCITY.



CREG FOUGHT WITH A FURY BORN OF DESPERATION, BUT SUDDENLY HE FELT A SEARING PAIN, AND HE SANK INTO OBLIVION.



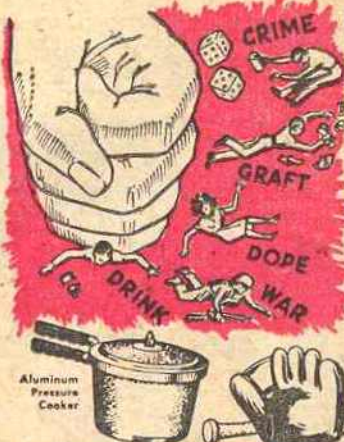
WHEN HE REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, HE DISCOVERED NABOLA BESIDE HIM. THE FAITHFUL GUIDE HAD SUCCEEDED IN RE-OPENING THE ENTRANCE. QUICKLY CREG EXPLAINED TO HIM WHAT HE SAW.



LOOK, NABOLA, YOU HAVE HERE IN MY FIST... A CROP OF MATTED HAIR! HOW COULD I HAVE GOTTEN THIS, UNLESS I ACTUALLY FOUGHT THOSE HAIRY THINGS?

YOU HAVE TOUGHT ME TO DISREGARD THE SUPERSTITIOUS OF MY PEOPLE, BWANA, BUT YET... THE WAYS OF THE EAST ARE STRANGE! THIS WILL REMAIN FOREVER A DEEP MYSTERY!





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Baby's Doll

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INVASION OF DEMONS FROM THE MIDDLE OF THE EARTH!

INVASION OF DEMONS

LOOK, SENOR, THEY ARE COMING! DIABLO, WHAT HORRIBLE CREATURES!

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GEORGE PELTZ

OUR STORY BEGINS IN AN EDITORIAL OFFICE A LARGE FEATURE MAGAZINE IN NEW YORK CITY...

ANDREWS, I HAVE AN ASSIGNMENT AND IT'S A LULU! YOU'RE TO FLY TO SAN PEDRO...

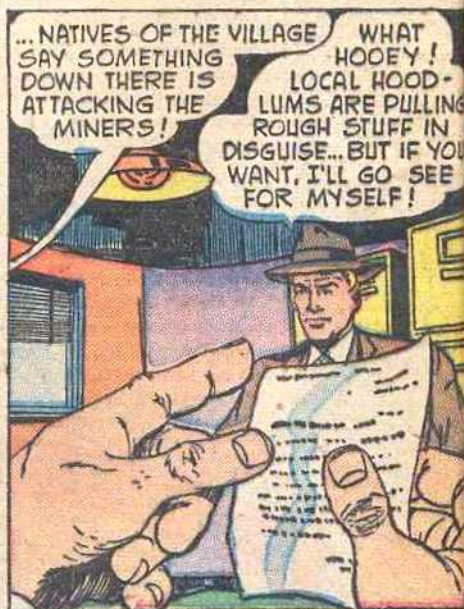
WHAT'S THE SET-UP?

...PROFESSOR VICKERS IN NEW ENGLAND UNIVERSITY RECORDED A QUAKE ON THE CHILEAN BOLIVIAN BORDER, IT CAUSED A SHIFT IN THE EARTH CONNECTING A MINE SHAFT WITH A NATURAL UNDERGROUND PASSAGE THAT GOES DEEP INTO THE EARTH...

BUT WHAT'S THE STORY IN THAT?

...NATIVES OF THE VILLAGE SAY SOMETHING DOWN THERE IS ATTACKING THE MINERS!

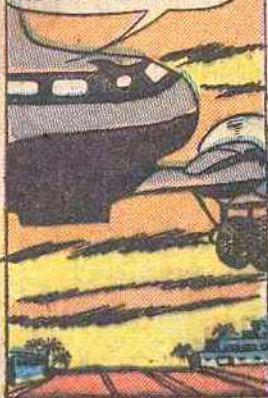
WHAT HOOEY! LOCAL HOODLUMS ARE PULLING ROUGH STUFF IN DISGUISE... BUT IF YOU WANT, I'LL GO SEE FOR MYSELF!



THE NEXT MORNING, JACK IS ON AN AIRLINER HEAD-
ING FOR SOUTH AMERICA...



FASTEN SAFETY BELTS
PLEASE! WE ARE
ABOUT TO LAND...



SAN PABLO AIRPORT...

SENOR ANDREWS, I
AM EXPECTING YOU!
COME WITH ME AND I'LL
CLEAR YOUR PAPERS!
WE LEAVE IN THE MORNING
FOR THE CHASM!

FINE! IF THERE'S NO
STORY, WE'LL WASTE
NO TIME! I HAVE
OTHER ASSIG-
NMENTS!

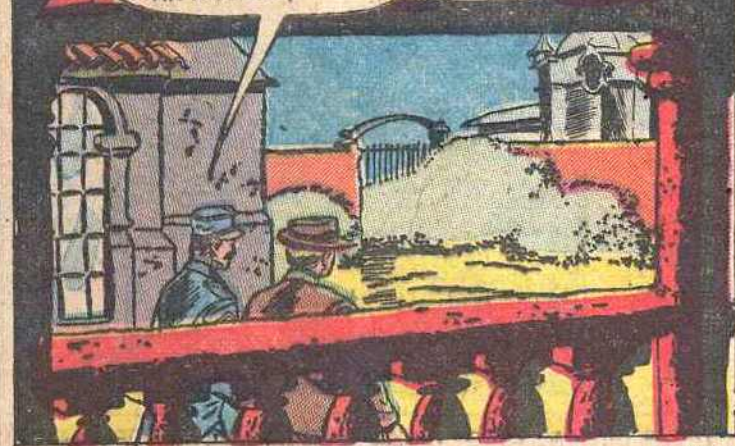


BELIEVE ME, SENOR,
THERE IS A STORY!
YOU CAN BE SURE
OF THAT! BY THE
WAY, I AM
SERGEANT RIZALES.
I AM TO ACCOMPANY
THE EXPEDITION
WITH TWO OF MY
SOLDIERS FOR
PROTECTION!

GLAD TO KNOW
YOU, SERGEANT,
ALSO HAPPY TO
KNOW YOU'RE
COMING WITH
US! I HEAR
THERE HAVE
BEEN SOME
MUGGINGS!



YES, SENOR ANDREWS! THE GOOD PEOPLE OF SAN PABLO
SAY THAT ON VERY DARK NIGHTS ONE CAN SEE STRANGE
CREATURES NOT HUMAN, GHOSTLY PALE IN COLOR!
THEY'RE BELIEVED TO HAVE EMERGED FROM THE DEPTHS,
AND THE HORRIBLE SOUNDS THAT COME FROM
BELOW... NO ONE GOES NEAR THE MINE
ANYMORE!



SOUNDS LIKE A
TALL STORY BUT
I'LL INVESTIGATE
ANYWAY!



THE NEXT MORNING, THE PARTY
GATHERS...

PROFESSOR VICKERS, WHAT
DO YOU THINK OF THESE
DEMON STORIES?



THERE ARE MANY THINGS THAT
CANNOT BE EXPLAINED! THERE
MAY BE CREATURES THAT LIVE
BELOW THE SURFACE, MOLES AND
OTHER CREATURES! IT IS POSSIBLE
THERE ARE LARGER CREATURES
UNKNOWN TO US...



BUT SIR, HOW DOES THAT TIE IN WITH THE "DEMONS" THE NATIVES ARE TALKING ABOUT?

WELL, IT ISN'T IMPOSSIBLE THAT SOME SORT OF ANIMAL MIGHT LIVE IN ONE OF THE ABANDONED MINE SHAFTS!



AT THE MOUTH OF THE SHAFT, THE EXPLORERS MAKE READY TO ENTER...

HERE ARE SOME MINERS' CAPS AND LANTERNS, GENTLEMEN! BUT WE MUST USE THEM SPARINGLY! I DON'T KNOW HOW FAR DOWN THE PASSAGE LEADS, I HAVE A PORTABLE GENERATOR IN CASE OF EMERGENCY...



THE EXPLORERS ENTER THE MINE AND TRAVEL DOWNWARD

HERE'S THE END OF THE MINE SHAFT! FROM HERE ON DOWN, IS THE NATURAL PASSAGEWAY!



EVER DOWNWARD, THE PARTY CLAMBERS FURTHER INTO THE EARTH, THEY USE ONE LIGHT AT A TIME TO CONSERVE THE LAMPS! PROFESSOR VICKERS TAKES THE LEAD! THEY HEAR SOUNDS, BUT THESE COULD BE BATS, OR SUBTERRANIAN CREATURES...

SENORS, DO YOU NOT HEAR STRANGE SCURRYING JUST BEYOND THE LIGHT?

IT COULD BE RATS OR ANIMALS THAT LIVE IN THE EARTH!



THEN AS THEY SUDDENLY ROUND A CORNER, THE LIGHT FLASHES UPON SOMETHING THAT SQUEAKED AND SCAMPERED BLINDLY OFF BEHIND SOME ROCKS...

WOW! DID YOU SEE THAT? WHAT WAS IT?

I'M NOT SURE! IT LOOKED LIKE A HUMAN IN A GENERAL WAY, YET IT WASN'T A MAN!



LOOK AT THIS! A HUGE MUSHROOM OF SOME SORT, HALF EATEN!

YES! THERE IS SOME FORM OF CREATURE LIVING HERE! THEY MUST LIVE UPON LARGE FUNGI!

THE PASSAGE BORE DEEPER INTO THE EARTH! IT SEEMS THAT THE NATIVES WERE RIGHT WHEN THEY SAID IT EXTENDS TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH! BUT WHAT ABOUT THEIR STORIES OF THE DEMONS THAT LIVE IN THE CENTER OF THE EARTH?



PROFESSOR, WE MUST BE MILES IN THE EARTH! LOOK AT THAT SCENERY!

YES, IT SEEMS TO BE WARMER AND FORMATIONS ARE DIFFERENT! I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH FURTHER WE CAN DESCEND!



THEY WERE NOW MILES IN THE EARTH, IT WAS A STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL SIGHT, YET WITH AN UNDERTONE OF EVIL THAT THEY COULD NOT SHAKE...

THERE'S SOMETHING OUT THERE! JUST BEYOND THE LIGHT!

I SENSE ALIEN PRESENCE! THEY SEEM AFRAID OF THE LIGHT!



DURING ONE OF THE REST PERIODS, THE LIGHTS WERE LOWERED TO CONSERVE THEM... THEY *KNEW* THERE WERE SOME CREATURES WAITING...

SERGEANT, I DON'T LIKE IT! THOSE THINGS HATE US! I HAVE THE FEELING THEY WANT TO HARM US!

THEY ARE TRULY LIKE DEMONS!



LOOK OUT!

EYOW!



A FLASH PICKS OUT A SQUEAKING RODENT-LIKE FIGURE RACING INTO THE DARKNESS AS A SOLDIER FIRES AT IT...

DIABLO! DID YOU SEE THAT?

IS IT BAD, SERGEANT?

NO, SENOR! JUST A FLESH WOUND!



IT IS A SPEAR MADE OF A STALAGTITE OR CALCIUM DRIPPING, AND CHIPPED INTO A SPEAR!

WE'D BETTER BE ALERT NOW! NO ANIMAL COULD MAKE THAT!



THEY WERE PERPLEXED, SOME ALIEN MALIGNANT CREATURES WERE WATCHING THEM WITH EVIL INTENT...

DO YOU STILL WANT TO GO ON, SIR?

WE'VE COME THIS FAR, I SAY CONTINUE!



THEY DECIDE TO CONTINUE, DOUBLY ALERT! BUT THEY COULD HEAR MORE SQUEAKING AND SCUTTERING JUST BEYOND THE RANGE OF THEIR BEAMS...

GENTLEMEN, I BELIEVE WE ARE NEARING THE LIMIT OF THIS PASSAGE! THE HEAT AND MOLTEN ROCK IS GETTING INTENSE! NOTHING CAN LIVE ANY FURTHER BELOW THIS LEVEL!



HERE'S THE END OF OUR JOURNEY! THE MOLTEN ROCK THERE MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE TO TRAVEL! WE WILL RETURN, WE MIGHT HAVE TROUBLE WITH THESE "MONSTERS"!



PROFESSOR, THERE ARE MORE OF THOSE MONSTERS...IT SEEMS LIKE THEY'RE GETTING SET TO GIVE US TROUBLE!



FLASH THE LIGHTS ON THEM, AND FIRE INTO THEM!

THE LIGHT SEEMS TO BOTHER THEM!



THEY CAN'T SEE IN THE LIGHT! THEY LIVED BELOW THE SURFACE SINCE LIFE BEGAN, IT BLINDS THEM!



TURN THE LIGHTS DOWN LET-EM GET CLOSER! FLASH THEM ALL AND GIVE THEM A VOLLEY! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE, THEY OUTNUMBER US!



WHEN THE LIGHTS FLASH ON, THERE BEFORE THEM IS A SCENE PRATICALLY OUT OF DANTE'S INFERNO, HORRIBLE PALE BLOATED RODENT-LIKE CREATURES. SHRIEK WITH HATRED AND MALICE CREATURES THAT SCREAM OUT OF NIGHTMARES BATTLE IN THE FLICKERING SHADOWS OF HORROR...



WE'VE DRIVEN THEM OFF FOR THE TIME! BUT THEY'LL BE BACK! WE'D BETTER CONTINUE BACK WHILE THEY'RE HESITANT!



ALL THE WAY BACK THEY FIGHT OFF THE SEMI-HUMAN DEMONS! WHILE THEY WERE STILL FAR FROM THE SURFACE, A NEW TROUBLE ARISES...



PROFESSOR, OUR LIGHTS ARE BEGINNING TO GET DIMMER! THE BATTERIES ARE USED UP!

WE BURNED THEM OUT IN OUR BATTLE WITH THE DEMONS! MY PORTABLE GENERATOR WAS DAMAGED IN THE FIGHT! GENTLEMEN, THE SITUATION IS CRITICAL!



THE LIGHTS ARE BEGINNING TO FLICKER AND DIM! ONCE THEY GO OUT, THEY ARE AT THE MERCY OF THE FIENDISH MONSTERS...

SENORS, WE CAN HOLD THE DEMONS OFF WHILE WE CAN SEE THEM, BUT WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT...?

DO THE BEST YOU CAN, SERGEANT!



SIR, THE LIGHTS WILL LAST LESS THAN FIVE MINUTES, AND THE MONSTERS ARE ALMOST UPON US!

YES, I KNOW! SAY, WHAT... IS THIS? PROFESSOR VICKERS, WE'RE SAVED! STAND BACK EVERYONE!

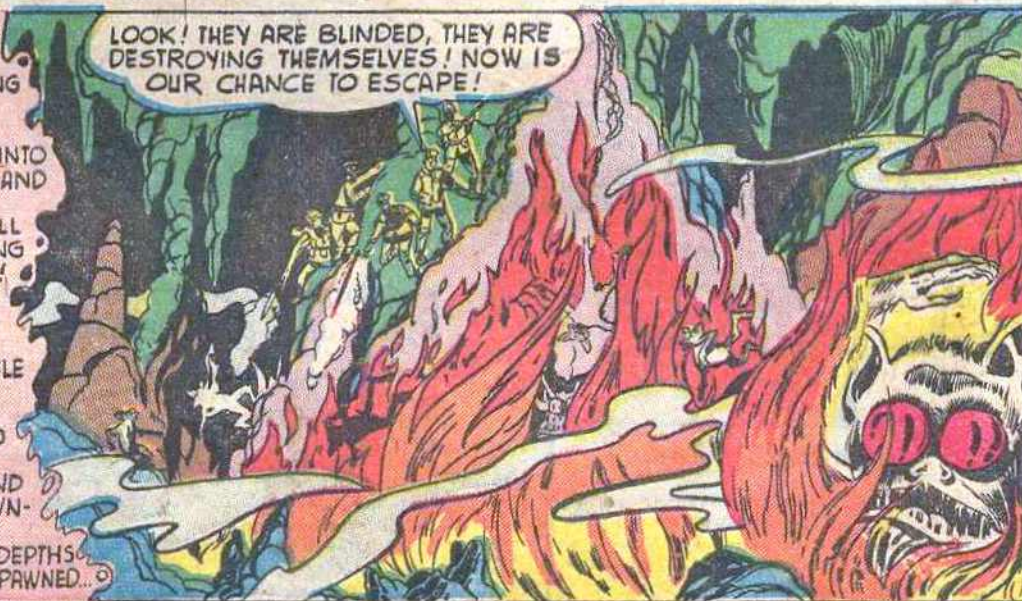


IS IT POSSIBLE THAT JACK HAD CRACKED UNDER THE STRAIN? HE AIMS UNDER A ROCK HANGING OVER A SLIMY, EVIL SMELLING POOL... AND FIRES! SPARKS FLY INTO THE DARK POOL...



THE POOL BURSTS INTO ROARING FLAMES SPREADING DOWNWARD INTO THE POOLS AND CREVICES, BLOTING ALL THE SHRIEKING CREATURES! BLINDING THEM IN THE ELARE SO THEY STUMBLE AROUND BLINDLY... THOSE WHO SURVIVE CLAMBER AND TUMBLE DOWNWARD INTO THE HELLISH DEPTHS... WHERE THEY SPAWNED...

LOOK! THEY ARE BLINDED, THEY ARE DESTROYING THEMSELVES! NOW IS OUR CHANCE TO ESCAPE!

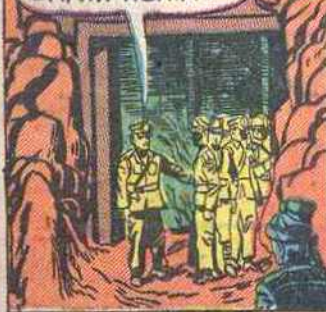


WE ARE NEAR THE MINE SHAFT, SOON WE'LL BE AT THE SURFACE... HOW DID YOU DO IT, JACK?

PROFESSOR, THAT POOL WAS OIL! THE SPARKS SET IT OFF AND IT WAS DRIPPING DOWNWARD! THE REST IS HISTORY!



GENTLEMEN, WE MUST SEAL OFF THAT ENTRANCE! YOU KNOW WHAT LIVES IN THE DEPTHS OF THE EARTH. WE MUST MAKE SURE THAT THOSE ABOMINABLE HORRORS NEVER WALK THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH AGAIN!



THE ENTRANCE WAS SEALED, AND JACK HAD HIS STORY, BUT COULD HE TELL IT? HOW ABOUT OTHER ENTRANCES THAT LEAD INTO THESE HELLISH DEPTHS. THOSE ENTRANCES THAT NO ONE KNOWS ABOUT? ...AND OTHER SPOTS ALL OVER THE WORLD, DO THESE PALE BLOBS OF LIVING NIGHTMARES WALK UPON THE EARTH IN DARKEST NIGHT?



THE END

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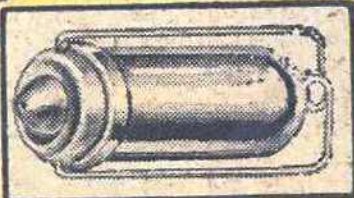
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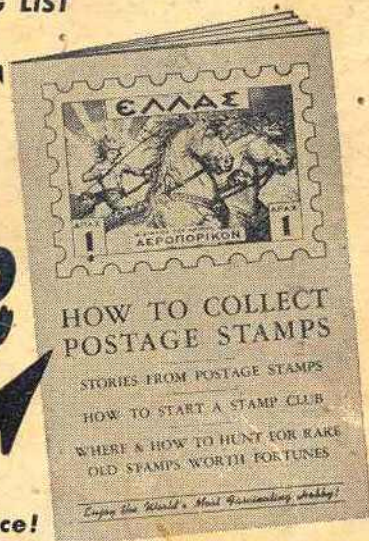
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